



Home staging helps show house at its best

New book reveals maximum profit benefits

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If you want to earn the maximum sales price for your house or condominium, first read Barb Schwarz's new book, "Home Staging." It reveals with words and pictures how to show prospective buyers the potential your home offers with proper presentation.

The author, a professional home decorating stager, shares her secrets for making a home listed for sale show its best. In other words, her goal is to make your ordinary home into a model home.

Because most home buyers have zero imagination, until a home is staged and professionally presented, most prospective buyers won't be able to spot the potential of a home offered for sale. Schwarz' new book explains the tactics of presenting a home to look its best, even on a limited budget.

Until I read this book, I didn't know there are professional accredited home stagers. Barb Schwarz is the organizer and creator of this new industry, which helps home sellers and their real estate listing agents attain maximum sales prices. In some cases, staging a home makes the difference, especially in a very slow local market, between selling and not selling a home.

Every residential real estate sales agent, most of whom have never met a professional home stager or suggested their home sellers hire a home stager, should read this eye-opening book. In addition, home sellers will benefit from a modest expenditure to buy the book and see what home stagers can accomplish to turn ugly duckling homes into swans.

Having been involved with home sales for many years, I have personally seen what home stagers can accomplish. Years ago, realty agents with a flair for home decorating advised their sellers how to make their homes more attractive. Today, this task has been taken over by professional home stagers who know how to "redo" a home at modest expense to make it more attractive to prospective buyers.

Schwarz claims to be the "inventor" of home staging in 1972. Who can challenge her? She says home staging changes lives. Perhaps a slight exaggeration, but the concept certainly changes wallets, especially for home buyers, sellers, realty agents and stagers.

Although I never staged any of my rental houses, looking back after reading this book, I now realize I probably left many dollars on the table by not making my houses show at their best. Spending a few thousand dollars on staging often results in many times that modest expense in the result of a faster sale (thus saving holding costs) for a higher sales price.

In her new book, Schwarz emphasizes both the visual changes home staging makes, and its resulting dollar benefits in the form of quicker home sales and for more money. She backs up her statements with facts rather than just opinions.

One of Schwarz' most memorable comments in the book is about "other real estate agents" who talk to their prospective buyers about the local houses for sale. She uses the nicknames agents sometimes use to help remember the many houses they inspect.

For example, she recalls the "Pretty Red Door House" and the "Cat-Pee House." Like it or not, that's how realty agents and their buyers remember houses.

"The home staging system is now time-tested. It has helped sell thousands, if not millions, of homes in the U.S. and Canada, and in several other countries as well. As the creator of home staging, I have never seen it not work. Sure, overpriced properties may sit, but it's price that

holds them back, not the staging. Two things sell a house: one is price, and the other is home staging," Schwarz modestly explains.

Chapter topics include: "So You're Selling Your Home"; "Ready, Stage, Sell: Home Staging Guidelines That Work"; "Staging Magic: How to Stage Each Room in Your House"; "Take the Staging Magic Outside"; "Getting It Done: It's Commitment Time"; "Tagging on a Dime"; "Showing Your Staged House: Lights, Music, Action"; "What Do You Do When You Need Help?" "Staging Tales from the Trenches"; "How to Work with Your Real Estate Agent"; and "How Home Staging is Changing the Real Estate Industry."

Although parts of this book will bore readers, serious home sellers and their savvy realty agents will love it for its insider tips and before-and-after photos of staged homes. Is it trickery or deceit to stage a home? After reading this unique book, I think staging means showing a house or condo at its very best. On my scale of one to 10, this excellent book rates a solid 10.

"Home Staging," by Barb Schwarz (John Wiley and Sons, Hoboken, NJ), 2006, \$19.95, 205 pages; available in stock or by special order at local bookstores, public libraries, and www.Amazon.com.

(For more information on Bob Bruss publications, visit his [Real Estate Center](#)).

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